

BUILDINGS FOR DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR SERVICE, TOKYO, JAPAN

JANUARY 15, 1925.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. TEMPLE, from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H. R. 9700]

The Committee on Foreign Affairs, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 9700) to authorize the Secretary of State to enlarge the site and erect buildings thereon for the use of the diplomatic and consular establishments of the United States in Tokyo, Japan, having considered the same, reports thereon with the recommendation that the bill do pass with the following amendments:

Page 1, line 6, after "embassy" insert "and such other land as may be necessary."

Page 1, line 7, after "diplomatic" insert "and consular."

Page 1, line 8, strike out all after "States," down to and including "establishment," line 9.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of State be, and he is hereby, empowered, at a cost not exceeding \$1,250,000, to acquire in Tokyo, Japan, additional land adjoining the site of the former American Embassy, and such other land as may be necessary, and construct thereon suitable buildings for the use of the diplomatic and consular establishments of the United States, the said buildings to include residences for the diplomatic and consular representatives, and the furnishing of the same, and an appropriation of \$1,150,000 is hereby authorized for this purpose, in addition to the sum of \$100,000 already available.

The conditions which make the early passage of this bill desirable are fully set forth in a letter from the Secretary of State dated January 6, 1925, and the message of the President dated June 3, 1924, which are as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, January 6, 1925.

MY DEAR MR. TEMPLE: I venture to mention to you the importance of obtaining favorable action at the present session of Congress, if practicable, upon House bill 9700, authorizing the acquisition of land and the erection of buildings thereon

in Tokyo for the use of the American Embassy and the consulate general. As you no doubt remember, legislation on this subject was urgently recommended by the President in his message to Congress under date of June 3, 1924, which is printed in Senate Document No. 129, Sixty-eighth Congress, first session, a copy of which is inclosed for your convenience.

The situation with regard to our diplomatic and consular establishments in Tokyo is unfortunate. The ambassador, Mr. Bancroft, is obliged to live in the Imperial Hotel, having found it impossible to rent any residence in the least degree suitable. The offices of the embassy are also located in the Imperial Hotel and have been since the earthquake in September, 1923, and are entirely inadequate. The rental is over \$9,000 per annum, which is 4 per cent upon an investment of \$228,000, an exceedingly large rental. Furthermore, as you can readily understand, a hotel is not a suitable place in which to have the offices of an embassy.

The offices of the consulate general in Tokyo are situated in inadequate quarters in one of the few office buildings not destroyed by the earthquake. The consul general resides in a Japanese house. The subordinate officers and employees of both the embassy and the consulate general are obliged to pay exorbitant rentals for rooms in the hotel or for houses which are not adapted to American living conditions and are remote from other offices and can be reached only by transportation facilities not always adequate.

Other governments, according to information in the department's possession, are making provision for the appropriate housing of their missions in Tokyo, and the British Government has already provided for the expenditure of some £300,000 (\$1,458,000) for the reconstruction of its embassy and consulate general. In view of the importance of the relations of our own country with Japan, it would seem highly desirable to establish our representation in Tokyo upon an adequate working basis at an early date and it would seem the more urgent at this time because the people of Japan are bending their utmost endeavors to reconstruct their capital and to restore it to the position it occupied in the life and work of the country before the earthquake disaster. I feel that such action on our part would be a demonstration of confidence in the recuperative power of the Japanese people and an evidence of our realization of the importance and value of our relationship to Japan.

For the foregoing reasons it would be most gratifying if favorable action could be had upon the President's recommendation before the end of the present session of Congress. If the committee should desire further information in regard to the situation in Tokyo it would give me pleasure to designate the proper officials of this department to appear before it at any time that you should desire them to do so.

I am, my dear Mr. Temple,

Very sincerely yours,

CHAS. E. HUGHES.

The Hon. HENRY W. TEMPLE,
House of Representatives.

To the Congress of the United States:

I transmit herewith a report by the Secretary of State concerning the necessity of legislation by Congress which will provide for the reestablishment of living and office facilities for the diplomatic and consular officers of the United States in Tokyo, Japan, to which I invite the attentive and favorable consideration of the Congress. The need for such legislation and its importance in the public interest are fully and convincingly presented by the Secretary of State, whose representations have my full concurrence.

I therefore earnestly recommend and strongly urge that Congress authorize an appropriation of \$1,150,000, as requested by the Secretary of State, for the purchase of land and the erection of buildings for the use of the embassy and the consulate general at Tokyo, of which, as explained by the Secretary of State, \$200,000 should be immediately provided for the purchase of additional land adjacent to the present embassy compound, and a site for a building in which to house the consulate general, as well as for expenses incident to the preparation of plans and obtaining bids for the construction of buildings.

CALVIN COOLIDGE.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 3, 1924.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, June 3, 1924.

The PRESIDENT:

I have the honor to invite your attention to the urgent necessity for the re-establishment of living and office facilities for the diplomatic and consular officers of the United States in Tokyo. As you are aware, the earthquake and succeeding fire on September 1 of last year totally destroyed the buildings occupied by the embassy in Tokyo and by the consulate general in Yokohama. At present the American ambassador to Japan is living in the palace of Prince Takeda which was loaned to him for temporary use only through the kindness of the imperial family; the offices of the embassy are now in the Imperial Hotel and are inadequate and costly; some of the members of the staff are living in such crowded accommodations as can be found in the undestroyed section of the city, paying, of course, extremely high charges for rents; others are still living in tents on the grounds of the destroyed embassy, since they have been unable to find elsewhere accommodations within their means. The same situation exists with regard to the consulate general. The depressing effect of the devastation wrought by the disaster of last September and the physical discomforts and extraordinary expenses of numerous kinds which have followed have produced a condition which renders efficient service on the part of the officers assigned to that post highly difficult.

The necessity for measures to relieve this emergency and properly to reestablish the representation of the United States in Tokyo is obvious, and therefore I have obtained from responsible architects and contractors, both in the United States and Japan, preliminary plans and tentative estimates of costs for the erection of suitable buildings in which to house the offices and American personnel of both the embassy and the consulate general.

Before September 1 the buildings in the embassy compound were sufficient only for the offices of the embassy and for the residence of the ambassador, the counselor, and the Japanese secretary. The other members of the staff had to find accommodations for themselves. That task, difficult enough then in a city in which the mode of life is so different from ours, has now, under the changed conditions, become nearly an impossible one. Few foreign houses existed before the earthquake; since seven-tenths of the city has been destroyed the number of such houses is much reduced.

Where formerly the staff could find accommodations with difficulty, it now becomes essential for our Government to provide for them. Whereas at the time when the old embassy was built the Government found it necessary to provide accommodations for only three officials and their families, accommodations must now be furnished for at least seven officials and their families and for the American clerical staff.

The embassy grounds (or "compound") were comfortably filled by the residence described above; certainly it would not be possible to extend their capacity to any great degree; therefore, additional land for the housing of the entire staff is necessary. By a fortunate coincidence a very desirable piece of property on rising ground, overlooking and abutting on the present grounds, is now for the first time available.

With reference to the consulate general, a careful survey of conditions in and about Tokyo and Yokohama seems to leave no doubt that in harmony with the tendency of large Japanese and foreign business firms in Japan to establish their head office in Tokyo, a tendency which was marked prior to the disaster, the consulate general should be removed to the national capital. Tokyo is a natural source of information in relation to business enterprises and corporations having foreign trade connections and business with the Government, and the presence of the consulate general in that city affords far better facilities for gathering information and looking after the wants of the American business community than would be the case were the consulate general retained in Yokohama. Whatever may eventually be done in regard to rebuilding the city of Yokohama, there is no doubt that Tokyo is to be the great commercial center and that the real work of the consulate general will lie there. Consequently soon after the disaster the consulate general was transferred to Tokyo.

Preliminary investigation indicates that if adequate provision is to be made for the offices of the embassy and consulate general and living quarters of the personnel with due regard to the peculiar requirements of the Far East, and that

if the type of construction of the buildings be such as to resist as successfully as may be feasible the effect of future earthquakes and fires, the cost will be approximately as follows:

| | | |
|--|------------|-------------|
| Embassy: | | |
| Additional land----- | \$140, 000 | |
| Ambassador's residence, offices, and living quarters for staff----- | 835, 000 | |
| | | \$975, 000 |
| Consulate general: | | |
| Land----- | 50, 000 | |
| Building for offices and living quarters for consul general and staff----- | 225, 000 | |
| | | 275, 000 |
| Total----- | | 1, 250, 000 |

There is already available for the construction of an embassy building, an appropriation of \$100,000 made by the act of June 30, 1914, which was not used because insufficient for the purpose. This sum could be applied to the expenses which it will now be necessary to incur, thus reducing the amount to be appropriated to \$1,150,000. For the purchase of land and the construction of buildings aggregating this sum it would not be necessary to appropriate immediately a larger sum than \$200,000 in addition to the amount already available, since the only expenditure that could probably be made at this time would be for the purchase of additional land adjacent to the embassy compound, a site for a building in which to house the consulate general and expenses incident to the preparation of plans and obtaining bids for the construction of buildings. The land, however, should be purchased without delay before desirable sites cease to be available.

These tentative estimates contemplate the construction of reinforced concrete buildings as nearly fireproof and earthquake-proof as modern methods of construction permit and include the cost of furniture and furnishings. Preliminary plans and estimates are in the files of the Department of State available for consultation.

I recommend earnestly that the Congress be requested to authorize an appropriation of \$1,150,000 for the purchase of land and erection of buildings for the use of the embassy and consulate general at Tokyo.

Other foreign governments are already preparing plans for the reconstruction of buildings in which to house their missions in Tokyo. The British Government has already provided in its budget for the expenditure of 300,000 pounds (\$1,458,000) for the reconstruction of its embassy and consulate general.

The relations of our own country with Japan are of the highest importance; and the importance of those relations must inevitably grow in proportion to the development of our interests in the Pacific and the increase of economic and cultural contacts. It therefore seems most essential to establish our representation in Tokyo upon a working basis at the earliest possible moment. Such prompt and adequate reestablishment of our representation would seem the more urgent because the people of Japan are bending their utmost endeavors to reconstruct their capital and to restore it to the position which it occupied in the life and work of the country before the earthquake disaster.

To do our part, in availing ourselves of the opportunity to place on a suitable basis our hitherto inadequate diplomatic and consular equipment in the area of the destroyed capital, would be not only a gratifying and helpful mark of our confidence in the recuperative power of the Japanese people, but also an evidence of our realization of the importance and value of our relationship with Japan. Such action would be a demonstration of confidence quite in the spirit of the splendid response made by our people to the call for the relief of the distress caused by the earthquake; and it would at the same time be of service in promoting the friendship between the two peoples and their Governments through the manifestation of our regard and high consideration for Japan.

It will be observed from the inclosed copy of a letter from the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, to whom the matter was referred, that the recommendation herein is not inconsistent with the financial program of the President.

Respectfully submitted.

CHARLES E. HUGHES.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House.